A COMPLAINT TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

AND

Resolution taken up by the free Protestant Subjects of the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, *and the Counties adjacent.*

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A Complaint to the House of COMMONS,

and resolution taken up by the free Protestant Subjects of the Cities of London *and* Westminster, *and the Counties adjacent.*

LOosers may speak by authority of a Proverb, and then we are sure we ought not to be silenced; we have seen and perused many Remonstrances, Declarations, Votes and Ordinances, and our vote upon them all is, That it had been happy for us, more advantagious to our Religion, and more honourable to our Nation, if they had been strangled in the birth, and never walked abroad in the light, and that it will never be well with us, or the Kingdome, till they be buried in oblivion: for we find so much bitternesse and asperity in some, so many jealousies and feares raised in others, so little truth in many, and so much danger in them all, that we may justly feare some Conjurers have been abroad to raise evill spirits, and that wee shall never be at quiet, till they be under ground. We have lived to see many changes in Church and State, as make our hearts ake, because for the most part they are still for the worst, and when we could not beleeve a degree beyond our miseries, and thereupon built hopes of amendment, our sense of suffering taught us new degrees of comparison; we will instance in a few, and by them guesse at the rest, (for we like not generalls, no more then letters testimoniall of credit without a name to owne them.) It is granted of all hands we are free Subjects, borne to the Lawes of the Kingdome as our birth-right, which we may challenge of right, and that we maintain the Protestant Religion against Popery, and all other Sects and Heresie, and that the Liturgy of the Church is established by Act of Parliament. We beseech you now consider how we were used in all these; Our estates were taken away under the gentle termes of Benevolences and Loanes, where the choice was, either to part with our Estates and Lands, or lye in Prison: When we found this pressure, we ran to the Law for

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protection, and found by wofull experience that innocence was a worse crime then felony; for he that was committed for Felony was admitted to baile, whileſt he that was committed for no cauſe was upon his *Habeas Corpus* remanded and continued in Priſon: Thus it fared with us in our Libertie, and not much better in our Property, for what with charge of Armes and Muſters (where the Lord Lieutenants, or Deputy Lieutenants ſpleen or will made a Law) and billetting Souldiers and the like, what we enjoyed was at the will of others rather then our own; and beleeve it, our lives were in no ſmall hazard, when Martiall Law was ſo freely talked of: Theſe were no ſmall loſſes to make men ſpeak; but we ſilently ſuffered, and not long after came our Petition of Right, which re-inveſted us in our legall inheritance again, and as we thought had ſetled us in that happineſſe which was immovable; but experience ſoon taught us the contrary, for a way was found out to create offences by Proclamation, and a Court that could make any thing an offence at their pleaſure, and puniſh it how they liſt, where great Lords could more eaſily impoſe five or 10000l. fine for a new made offence, then pay the tenth part of ſuch a ſumme for their own juſt Debts; and to make their ſentences more ſevere, could find out new Priſons, and cloſe impriſonment to ſeparate the diſtreſſed from their friends, yea and whip men too, and inflict other corporall puniſhment, which is not pleaſing to us in the remembrance: Nay, it was grown to ſuch a height of naughtineſſe, that the baſe Projectors and Monopolizors (the bane of the Commonwealth) made uſe of that Court of Iuſtice (if ſo we may call it) to uphold their villany (let that ſtinking Sope Project witneſſe whether we ſpeak truth or not.) And as if we could not have been undone ſoon enough, we had a Maſter Project invented to ſubmit all our eſtates to the Kings pleaſure by a new deviſed Ship-writ, whereby the King might make a neceſſity at pleaſure, and then impoſe what he thought fit, which after it had been hatched and contrived by ſome over-learned wicked brains, was countenanced under a pretext of Law by the Iudges, (in mentioning of which we intend not either *Walter*, *Hutton*, or *Crook*, who are dead, or *Crew*, who is yet living, for their memories are pretious with us for honeſt men,) and this was proſecuted with no ſmall violence (as many other projects beſides) by the Kings Councell at Law, who may bluſh for ſhame, or at leaſt quake for fear, to think how they miſ-led a good King and their gratious Maſter, to the grievance of His beſt Subjects. It afflicts us to think of the preſſures we underwent by new impoſts and that involuntary dange-

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rous president of excise of 40.s. *per Tonne* upon wine, besides divers other grievances. And yet all these past currant under the specious and plausible pretence of the Subjects good, (which Mr *Attorney* Generall found, and so expresst it in his Study,) but we found the quite contrary in experience. And as our troubles were thus multiplyed in the Common-wealth, so did they no lesse increase in the Church; we had new devices leading fast on towards Popery. It began under the fair pretence of orderly service of God by railing in the Communion-Table, providing Church-ornaments, and the like, (which we are so farre from condemning, that we should have had cause to thanke them if they had stayed there,) for we well approve of harmlesse and inoffensive Ceremonies, and decent form of Gods worship and Service) but what with their new Christning our Communion-Tables to make them Altars, setting them Altar-wise at the upper end of the Chancell, advancing them upon steps, in some places changing them from wood to stone, setting up Crucifixes, and then bowing and cringing, and the bold Sermons for auricular confessions, free-will, merit, reall presence in the Papisticall sense, and such other stuffe; we could not well tell where they would rest untill they had brought in the Idoll of the Masse, Image-worship, and the like, and made the Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury* equall to a Pope in *England*, who to our grief had obtained that command in Church and State, and that power at Councell Board, Star-chamber, and High-Commission, (besides his under-hand awing the Common-Law Iudges to betray the Law to his will) that he Lorded it all the Kingdome over, and by the assistance of some of his under Bishops (as bad as himselfe,) and others more easie to be wrought upon, he brought the Clergy (some few godly Ministers excepted, who then by way of disgrace were termed Puritans, and now Popishly affected Malignants) to be at his Command, who preached (or rather prated) nothing but blinde obedience, and the Kings Prerogative, and such things as they understood not, to make us odious to Our Prince, and raise themselves to preferment (which was too ready a way in those times to accomplish their desires.) We would not be mistaken, as if we did inveigh against Arch-Bishops, or Bishops, or bore ill will to the Clergy in generall, we like well of their dignities and orders, and there are many among them, who by their pious Preaching, gratious lives, godly examples, and orderly Government in the Church, have been great instruments of our good, and by their depth of knowledge and learning, stop the mouthes of Papists, Schismatiques, and Heretiques, we pray for them, and that God would en-

ereale the number of them, and if it had not been thought otherwiſe fit by the State, we ſhould never have denyed the Biſhops a place in the Lords Houſe in Parliament, and hope they ſhall yet continue to have a name and fit power of government in the Church, though their Votes in Parliament be gone, (which for the manner of carriage in taking them away (if all be true that we hear) was not ſo well as we could have wiſhed for the honour of that great Court which we ſhall labour to uphold.) By this time we preſume you will thinke we may ſpeak to the purpoſe, for our loſſes were not ſmall; if the loſſe of Property, Liberty, Life, or Religion be great. But you will object, Theſe were not loſt, onely in hazard, and that all theſe are now put out of danger, by aboliſhing Ship-money, and all other things of that nature, and by other good Bills paſſed this Parliament, and a Bill ready to be paſſed for a Synod, if the King will give His aſſent. To which we anſwer, and acknowledge the goodneſſe of the King, that he did not extend His Power in the caſe of ſhip-money to that latitude, when time was (as our Iudges put into His Power,) and when He was adviſed by His Great Councell it was againſt Law, He yeelded to aboliſh it. We confeſſe His Grace to us in the Bill for the Trienniall Parliament, and in regulating His Councell Table, and putting downe His Court of Star-chamber, and High-Commiſſion, and other good and profitable Lawes, conſented to by Him, and made for us this Parliament; and we bleſſe God we have ſuch a King, and pray heartily for His long Life, and happy Raign over us, and publiſh to all the World, That we doe from our hearts acquit Him from the guilt of all our ſufferings, and a thought in any of us of His inclination to Popery, and wiſh that thoſe who are in Authority under Him would learn goodneſſe by His example, and that the whole Kingdom were as ſound in the Proteſtant Religion; but yet withall, we muſt let Him and all the world know too, that our condition at preſent is ſo farr from being bettered, that it is grown extreamly worſe, as if all the evills of former times had been epitomized into the Volume of a yeare laſt paſt, or there abouts, and the quinteſſence of ours and the former Ages grievances extracted and given us at one draught: It is true we had a Parliament called before this, on which our hopes depended much for redreſſe of our evills, and how unhappily it ended we too ſenſibly feele. Whether he that is dead, or the late Comptroller that is living (and would have ſet that unvendible commodity of Ship-mony to ſale in that Parliament for twelve Subſidies) were the cauſe of it, we judge not, nor condemne any. And it is as true, this Parliament to our thinking was called

led ſeaſonably for our reliefe; and the unhappy differences ariſen in *Scotland*, almoſt miraculouſly quieted, and our Brethren of that Nation returned home peaceably (though we muſt not forget that it coſt us 300000. l. beſides the many thouſands weekly their Army and Ours had for their ſupport here, which we could wiſh had been ſpared.) And we ought likewiſe to acknowledge (for it is a truth not to be denyed) the care both Houſes of Parliament have taken for ſuppreſſing Popery, diſcountenancing Miniſters Popiſhly affected, and the many expreſſions they have made for maintaining our Proteſtant Religion and Lawes; but for all this, we have now more cauſe to complain then ever. At the beginning of this Parliament they removed one highly charged for endeavouring the ſubverſion of the Fundamentall Lawes of the Land, and many other Treaſons, which how farr guilty we determine not, becauſe we heard no evidence, and though we are ſure he was a great cauſe of our ſufferings, yet we could with his Attainder might have been in ſuch manner, as others taking notice of his puniſhment, might have feared to commit the like crimes, and not ſo to puniſh, as to need a Declaration, that his manner of puniſhment ſhould not be drawn into example afterwards, (the ready way to draw a ſuſpition upon the Iuſtice of his ſentence,) but if our Fundamentall Lawes be all ſubverted, what doth his puniſhment advantage us? The Houſes likewiſe took care for committing the Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury* to the Tower, Iudge *Bartly* to the Sheriffes of *London*, S r *George Ratcliffe* to the Gate-houſe, and all theſe for no leſſe crimes then high Treaſon; but we are aſhamed to thinke that they ſhould lye in Priſon above two yeares together without a legall tryall, (which will be a faire juſtification of all our Iudges of inferiour Courts for delay of Iuſtice, and no ſmall injury to the free Subjects of *England* in the precedent to be deprived of their Liberty ſo long, upon a bare ſurmiſe,) nay we heare (but will give no preſent credit to it for the honour of both Houſes) that one of the Iudges of the Kings-Bench is kept Priſoner in the Tower for no cauſe at all expreſt, (or any juſt one that we can learn,) and Iudge *Bartly* that lyes under the impeachment of high Treaſon, appointed by both Houſes to ſit Iudge againe in that Court; which if it be true, we muſt plainly tell you, that we feare the Impeachment againſt him (as well as againſt halfe a dozen more of his Brothers, that never proceeded further then an accuſation) was rather to awe them, and make them ſerve turns upon occaſion, (keeping them under the laſh) then out of zeale of Iuſtice, or for the common good.

Nay, we have good advertiſement, (for we are not ſo well acquainted

led in the Priſons, as to know by ſight) of many hundreds committed by both Houſes this Parliament (where by the way we ſhould be glad to know how the Houſe of Commons, being only part of the Body of the Great Councell, & no Court of Record, have got a power to commit ſuch as are none of their Members) (for wiſe men and good Lawyers queſtion it) we ſay many hundred committed, and not one convicted, except the Lord Major Sir *Richard Gurney*, *Binion*, and the now Kings Attorney; for the latter of which we are not ſo wiſe as to underſtand his fault, being a high point of new-Parliament Priviledge, which his Iudges could not by a known Law ſuddenly find any puniſhment for; and for *Binion* let it reſt upon the conſciences of his Iudges, whether he were guilty of the crimes charged by good proof; but this we muſt ſay that we are not ſatisfied, but that he ought to have been tried by twelve Free-men upon their Oathes, according to the Great Charter of *England*, and not by the Lords, who are not our equalls: and for the ſentence it ſelfe we have ſo juſt cauſe of complaint, that if ſuch arbitrary juſtice proceed, we ſhall find little eaſe by transferring the Star-chamber from one end of *Weſtminſter* Hall, to the Lords Houſe at the other; and it will be much alike to be committed by the Star-chamber to *Carnarvon* Caſtle, & the Lords Houſe to *Colcheſter* Gaole, and much worſe to be committed during the pleaſure of that Houſe, then the Kings, for we find Him more inclinable to mercy, (though we wonder much how the King loſt a power of pardoning, or ſhewing mercy in any crime whatſoever, that did not concern a particular Subject.) And for the honeſt Lord Major *Gurney*, if you will beleeve us, (and many of us were preſent at his tryall) he might with more honour, and juſtice too have been acquited then ſentenced, his greateſt fault being his obedience to his King, and true ſervice to the Citty, according to his Oath and Duty of his place. If theſe things be true, it will make us feare ſome body ſhares with the Serjant at Arms Meſſengers, and Gaolers in the fees, and that little care is taken of the Subjects Liberty in the mean time. It may be thought theſe things nothing concern us, but beleeve it there is more in it then ſo: that which is one Subjects caſe now, may be ours, or our childrens hereafter; and a bad precedent is many times of great authority, & dangerous conſequence, which we are the more ſenſible of, becauſe we hear ſome ignorant Lawyers of the Houſe of Commons (one of which wears a ſcarlet-hood, which he paid dear for, and was held none of the wiſeſt the beginning of this Parliament) are pickt out to finde precedents, and juſtifie by Law the legality of ſequeſtring mens eſtates and inheritances,

to turn the King out of His Power, of making Sheriffes of Counties, and put that in the people, and by consequence deduce it to themselves; nay some (whom we blush for) have not been ashamed to put in print a precedent for deposing a King, and could find no better then King *Richard* the second, who all the World knows (to the scandall of this Nation) was traiterously murthered, the whole Progresse of which Act was a horrid Treason, upon the fairest relation of any Cronicle. And therefore we beseech you blame us not, if we here by way of exception, make mention of them, that they may not hereafter be cited to the prejudice of us and our posterity. We crave leave now to lay down truly and plainly (for our condition is such, that we must not palliate) the redresse of our grievances by this Parliament. Indeed, we acknowledge a great deal of zeale in the House of Commons in questioning Projectors, Monopolizors, and the like, but it was too hot to continue, for we doe not know of one of them to this day punished: Nay *Kilvert*, that grand Projector in the 40. s. *per Tonne* excise, so farre from punishment, as our great Masters of the House of Commons were not ashamed to make use of his skill (who is known to be very dextrous to oppresse) to have drawn all the poor Vintners of *London* to make Fine and Ransome, and if they have escaped, they may thank their poverty, and not their innocence: how this comes to passe we know not; but this we know, that Alderman *Abel* (*Kilverts* Comrade in that businesse) was a rich man (and the King gives a hint, as if one of the House of Commons (a crying sinne, if it be true) could take mony,) and whether *Kilvert* or *Abel* made friends there, and so got off (for it is too too evident, that there is notable friending there in causes, both at Committees and in the House,) or whether in the examination of that businesse they stumbled upon some Grandee, or others as deep in that project as they, we cannot tell: but sure we are, they are at liberty, and unpunished, when many of our honest brethren, and free Subjects are kept in Prison, for maintaining their rights by Law.

A great adoe was made about the Customers for their exacting Customes and Imposts, but the conclusion of that businesse shews plainly, the House of Commons aimed meerly to get money, for the Customers purchased their peace of them, (which phrase sounds ill in a place of Iustice) and now the House of Commons against expresse Law exact the like Customes and imposts, which they dispose at pleasure, and think an Order of both Houses a dispensation to that *Premunire* in their Act of Parliament, which we feare will scarce, upon a

faire and legall triall, excuſe: What think you of the Project of ſealing Gold and Silver thred and wire (which the poor Artiſts about *London* ſo much cried out upon?) If any body hath been puniſhed for that abuſe, it is more then we could ever heare; yet we, and both Houſes too know that great Lord of the Houſe of Peeres, and Sir H. *Mildmay* ſtill of the Houſe of Commons, that dipt their fingers deep in it; nay, and though the King gives a gentle reproofe for it, wee ſee nothing done thereupon, which makes us beleeve, that it was not altogether pure Iuſtice in voting out all Monopoliſts and Projectors, &c. out of the Houſe of Commons, and yet ſo notorious a one kept in; nay, by your leave we can tell you who eſcaped turning out upon the Loan of 50000l. which was ill news to us, to think that Houſe could be hired with money; and yet we have wiſhed ſince, that all the Members of the Houſe had been as able to furniſh mony as he; for then peradventure many as wiſe and as honeſt, and of as cleare repute in the common-wealth, (though the man is free from exception) which have been voted out without any cauſe, might peradventure have ſate there ſtill, and by their wiſdom and moderation (if that be of weight there) prevented many ſudden unadviſed Votes, which will ſcarce be for the honour of Parliaments in ſucceeding ages. And ſince we are thus unhappily fallen into the Houſe, we muſt (though by digreſſion) let you know how ſenſible we are in apprehending the truth of His *Majeſties* Declaration in the undue courſes of election of Knights and Burgeſſes, and as undue in turning out thoſe duly elected, and putting worſe in their rooms; and the notable fiding and making Parties thereabouts, inſomuch as the Committee for elections, hath got the Nickname of the Committee of affection, where every one is more for his friend, then the right; and if all the houſe of Commons be Iudges (as they pretend to be,) we can charge every one of them with ſuch ſollicitation and pre-inſtruction in cauſes and engagements to a party, as were enough to turn any other Iudge of England out of his place, and forfeit all his eſtate; and that juſtly too.

We would be glad to know what was the cauſe of turning the Lord *Falkland*, Sir *John Culpepper*, Sir *Io. Strangwaies*, Maſter *G. Palmer*, and divers others out of the Houſes, (for they were voted out by ſcores hand over head) unleſſe it were becauſe they ſpake more reaſon then the more violent party could anſwer; and therefore it was come to that paſſe, that (clean contrary to the uſe, yea and the honour of Parliaments too) things were not debated by reaſon and ſtrength of Argument, but by putting it to the queſtion, and carrying it by moſt voices,

voices, where the greater number were so farre from understanding, many times, the force of Arguments, that they did not after the vote was past conceive the state or sense of the question, but thought it was enough for them to vote with Master *Pym*, or Master *Hampden* by an implicite faith, and if they differed (as seldome they did) then crosse or pyle, vote at adventure: doe not think we are too bold herein, or this is breach of priviledge; for when these things are told abroad (and it were pitty they should be concealed, lest they should not be amended.) Blame not us for complaining of them, when we suffer so much by them; and if it be a breach of priviledge, we hope we shall escape as well as Master *Laurence Whittakers*, the late Clerk of the Councell, for a farre greater, who searcht Master *Hampdens* pockets, and took away his papers, soon after the breach of the last Parliament, and yet now continued a Member of the House of Commons. Indeed, we heare much complaint touching the breach of Parliament-priviledge, principally that touching the Lord *Kimbolton*, and the five members of the House of Commons, and we so farre dislike the Kings going to the House of Commons, as we take it to be against the priviledge of Parliament, and wish with all our hearts it had been forborn: But after the King hath given so full satisfaction therein, and in plain terms made an acknowledgement thereof, (a rare thing in a Prince) that it should still be mentioned, (as if all errours in a King were never to be forgotten) we must needs think there is not that care of preserving the Kings honour, and desire of unity between him and his people, as all honest men wish for, and that the Kings faults are nothing neere so many as are pretended, that this must be so often reiterated to make up a number. And yet by the way we must hint thus much, if that Lord or five Members be guilty of Treason, we shall not stick to convict those five Members, and see them duly executed, according to the old Law; for we never heard that any Parliament man had a priviledge of parliament in his tryall for Treason, till this Parliament, and we mean not to uphold new created priviledges.) Surely, breach of Parliament priviledge is not a sinne unpardonable, (if it be) it will fare ill with some of both Houses that discovered the difference of opinion by some of the House of Commons by name, in the businesse of the late Earle of *Strafford*, and the well-affected Lords in the House of Peeres, in the businesse of the Church-Liturgy. I, and with all the rabble of Brownists and Anabaptists, that with unheard of impudence durst ask the question publikely at the Barre in the House of Commons, who they were which opposed the well-affe-

Acted party in that House, (a thing unpresidented) and that more noble person of the House of Commons, that did not stick to aske the like question in the House of Lords, (though we charge not that upon his score (blame to them that injoyned him that task.) Nay, what shall become of the multitude of the zealous Sectaries, and rabble of ignorant people sent to both Houses, but specially to the House of Peeres, by Captain *Ven* and his wife, and *Isaack Pennington*, to cry Iustice, Iustice, and, No Bishops, No Bishops, and to terrify some Lords from the House, and aw others that were there; we can find no way but a pardon, or an Act of oblivion: for we are sure there were never higher breaches of Parliament priviledge then these, nor a greater staine upon Parliament proceedings, God grant they rise not up in judgement against us and the Nation. We are loth to rub too hard upon this sore, we know it is a tender place, else we could tell strange things done this Parliament, not only *ex tempore* Votes, but Bills passe *ex tempore* the same day they were first read, contrary to the gravity and reason of all former times, as if they could as well vote and make Acts of Parliament by the spirit *ex tempore*, as their Levites can pray and preach; and to say the truth, are much alike, which makes Religious and wise men ashamed of both, and is no small cause of our complaint. Let no man think this a businesse of no concernment to us, it is no lesse then our losse of Parliaments, (whereby we shall loose all our happinesse) if we loose the honour, wisdome, gravity and justice of them: and we must complain till we see amendment, and must crave pardon of our noble Lords to tell them, that we see (what they know to be true) so much siding and engaging one another in their Committees in matters of civill justice, that if there were a superior Court to complain unto of what they have mis-done this Parliament, (besides the many delaies and protractions of causes) whilest those who should attend to heare and judge, are in bed, or at play, or some worse employment, or idle at the best) our Iudges of inferior Courts (whom we formerly complained of, and not without cause) would be reckoned little Gods by way of comparison; and few of their best Orders are worth the charge of attendance, and Lawyers and Clerks fees. And surely when things are thus carried, we have cause to speake, but the worst is yet behind; for (as if our Parliament (which was wont to redresse all our grievances) envied our happinesse, and studied our ruine) they have found out a new way to deprive us of our Lawes, Liberty, and property. This may be thought very strange at the first sight, but we shall so plainly demonstrate it, as we doubt not, but (the

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Parliament men themſelves being reaſonable Iudges) it will be aſſented unto for an undeniable truth; and it will be evident to every ordinary underſtanding, that under the pretence of defending our Lawes and Religion, we are couzened of both: To begin with our Lawes (and follow them for the preſent, though in an ill preſident, in putting Religion at the fagge end, when other buſineſſe is done,) we have got a new Law of Ordinances ſo called, that hath turned all our Liberties, Property, Petition of right, and all other old known and rightfull Laws out of doors; & if we continue ſo ſimple longer to ſubmit to them, the free Subiects of *England* ſhall be in worſe condition then a Turkiſh ſlave: whileſt they are at the mercy of one, we at the pleaſure & command of hundreds, to diſpoſe our lives, liberties, eſtates, wives and children, yea and our Religion too, according to their humours. The firſt time we found this ſtealing in upon us, was in the buſineſſe of the *Militia*, which we ſwallowed without any examination of the legality, being driven into amazement with feares of ſome ſudden and unavoidable danger; and blame us not, if we were apprehenſive thereof upon printed relations of ſo many pretended horrid treacheries againſt the Parliament, when every day almoſt produced a diſcovery of a new treaſon: That of the Taylors in Moore fields; the Stable of Horſes under ground; the Daniſh Fleet that was diſcomfited by *Van Trump*, along time ſince, beſides other ſtrang diſcoveries, and letters that came God knowes from whence, for the Authors may be aſhamed to be knowne; and ſuch like fictions, that ſerved only to amaze us, whileſt in the mean time we yeelded to that illegall power put in the Lievtenants of the *Militia*, thinking only thereby to defend our ſelves from a preſent force; but we find now that it is and hath been put in execution to diveſt our King of His Forts, Townes, Caſtles, Navies, Goods and Revenues, and to put the ſtrength of the Kingdome in the power and command of poore men, of deſperate fortunes or factions, and Schiſmaticall men addicted to Anabaptiſme and Browniſme: Look amongſt the *London* Commanders, from *Fowk*, *Normington*, and other the Princes of the *Militia*, by Colonell *Ven* and *Manwaring*, as low as Captain *Bradly* and *Baſte* (if bankrupting be a badge of poverty) and compare the reſt of the Liſts, and for one honeſt able Commander, you will find more then twice as many Schiſmaticall beggarly Sectaries; indeed, ſome are men of worth, elſe the cheat had bin too groſſe. Wee confeſſe wee were not ſo ſenſible, as diſcretion would have taught us, of the taking of *Hull* from the King, and ſeizing His Armes there, and little thought His Declaration was a true pro-

phefie that our turnes would be next: We never dreamt, that any under pretext of Religion, or preſenting a Petition to our King, would have aſſaulted His Royall Perſon, as at *Keinton*, an act which we diſavow to the preſent age, and all ſucceeding generations: we could not have beleeved, if we had not tried it by wofull experience, that our horſes and goods ſhould have been taken away againſt our wills by *Iſaac Pennington*, or any his officers; that ſouldiers ſhould have been billeted in our houſes per-force, nay and Martiall law voted to be put in execution by two Houſes of Parliament, and that ſitting a Parliament, and whileſt other Courts of Iuſtice, Aſſiſes, Seſſions, and the Courts of *Weſtminſter* were all open; we wonder where the new offences of Malignants and ill-affected, and men not to be confided in, are to be found in our Law? and what puniſhment is due to them? And we no leſſe wonder how it was poſſible that noble Lord (whom we took to be our Patron in defence of our Religion and Lawes) was drawn in, or brought on to be Generall of an Army againſt our King, and to be an inſtrument of ſo much miſchief to us; and how thoſe brave Lords, *Northumberland*, *Warwick*, *Holland*, *Bedford*, *Salisbury*, *Howard* and honeſt *Pembrook*, with ſome other honeſt Lords, and the remnant of honeſt & wiſe men left in the Houſe of Commons, could be led on all this while, and not diſcover the miſery that was brought upon us and our poſterity by this new found Law? It is too late now to prevent what is paſt, and it is ſome comfort to us to heare that they underſtand, and are ſenſible of our ſufferings and dangers, and endeavour to prevent them; but unleſſe a ſpeedy courſe be taken, we ſee our ruine ſo imminent, that we muſt fall to put our Reſolutions in practice: as if all the former grievances were too little, (putting in the plundering of houſes, & more then barbarous cruelty in the unheard of tortures which the Parliament Forces uſed to ſome of our neighbours,) old *Beſt* of *Canterbury*, and Sir *William Botelers* man of *Kent*, and others for inſtance of the latter, and his Maſter, and hundred houſes more plundered by them for proofe of the former.) There is now another ſo named Ordinance for taking away the twentieth part of our eſtates, and proviſion by additionall ſo called Ordinances, to levie it by diſtraining our goods, impriſoning our perſons, and turning our wives, children and families out of doores; which when we firſt peruſed, we concluded with our ſelves, that either thoſe which made it were not well in their wits, or did beleeve all the Subjects of *England*, but themſelves, fools, to ſuffer it to be put in execution. We are much engaged to our King (as for many other favours) ſo particularly for that His laſt Declaration of the eight of *December*,

ember, by way of answer to that pretended Ordinance, and his charge not to obey it. And we find his good advertisements in other his Declarations too true, (we wish we had heeded them better in time) but we must with all humility let Him and every one else know, that from the first perusall of that Ordinance we were resolved to oppose it to the death: we found it evident enough, that they might by the like new law take the other nineteenth part of our estates when they pleased, and our lives too. And they of the House of Commons were much mistaken, who thought it a favour to us in sparing our lives in this; for he is a poore spirited man, that would chuse to live in a prison, and see his estate taken from him, and his wife and children turned a begging, & banished: And therefore we must now deale roundly for the truths, as others have done for wrong. We would faine know how long it is since the making law by Ordinance was in use, for some of us (as old as since the beginning of Queen *Elizabeths* time) never knew it till this Parliament? Indeed, we have heard of such things that were of ancient times, (and it may be lawfull too) but cannot yet learn by any good Antiquary or Lawyer, That both Houses of Parliament, without the Kings consent, did make an Ordinance to bind the free Subjects of *England* in their lives, liberty, or estates. If an Order of both Houses may make new Law, or abrogate or suspend our old, you may quickly seize upon all our estates, and bestow them amongst your selves and friends; and you have shown us a good inclination that way, in bestowing 6000.li. upon your Speaker of the House of Commons, and places of command, and no small profit in the Army upon Members of both Houses, their children, kindred, and friends, which for their skill in warre might as well have been spared in the Army: As for Councell in the House, witnesse those grave and valiant Lords, *Hastings*, *Rochford*, *&c.* And we could never learn of any great experience of Martiall valour in my Lord *Say*, or his son (that had the fleet unruly horse) to draw them so conscienciously to undertake imployments of that nature. But we find little conscience made of taking pluralities of Command in the Army (a Regiment of foot, and Troop of horse) and stay at home and take the pay, which comes out of our purses, and complain of lazie Ministers for pluralities of Church-livings: We like not the latter, and we doe as much condemne the former.

We thought we should have had thankes given to such of us as had been wrought upon to bring in our Plate, and lend Mony to the Parliament, more then wise men would have done; and that it had been an impossibility that ever the quantity and proportion should have

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been quiſtioned, and a taxe follow. Will our great Lords and others of great eſtates in both Houſes part with the twentieth part (ſo roundly?) Our choiſe it ſeemes is now as in the beginning, differs onely in this; There lend, or goe to priſon; Here lend, or take and ſell our goods, put our perſons in a Gaole, turne wives and children out of doores, and baniſh them.

What is become of our Petition of right? what uſe of a Trienniall Parliament? If this laſt but a few dayes at this rate, we ſhall have never a Free-holder of 40. ſ. a yeare left to chuſe Knights, nor a free Citizen but in a priſon. We wonder that this new kind of Ordinance was not ſooner found out. It would have ſpared the trouble of getting the Kings aſſent to many Bills. Why was not *Strafford* kill'd with an Ordinance? the Biſhops diſcharged out of the Lords Houſe with an Ordinance? and this Parliament made everlaſting by an Ordinance? What dull unlearned men were Sir *Edw. Coke, Phillips, Elliot, Digs, Sands, &c.* that could never find or deviſe this knack of forging new Lawes in former Parliaments?

The rule you make is, That an Order of both Houſes, which you miſ-call an Ordinance, binds us during the Parliament. If you had but made, or doe yet make ſuch an Order, this Parliament can never diſſolve, and we muſt re-call our thanks for our Trienniall Bill, for we ſhall be made uncapable of taking fruit by it. Seeing you are pleaſed to proceed thus farre, we beſeech you make one Ordinance more, That both Houſes ſhall be a Corporation, to take Lands and goods to them and their Succeſſors, and that they ſhall be the only Projectors of all the Lands and goods in the Kingdome, and when any of that Corporation dyes, *toties quoties*, the Survivor and none elſe ſhall chooſe a Succeſſor to perpetuity. And if this be binding to the Subjects (as it muſt be if your rules hold) we have ſpun a faire thred in ſending Knights and Burgeſſes to this Parliament. Indeed you have dealt gently with us (in compariſon) in taking but the Twentieth part, having ſtopt all the Kings, Queens, and Princes Revenues, and left them to live upon Almes (which all men cry ſhame of,) and we beleeve will not be well taken by our Brethren of *Wales*, that you ſhould ſo uſe their Prince, how bold ſoever you make with our King; truly, we find as ſpecious Preambles to theſe new Ordinances to ruine us, as to any former Projects and Monopolies, which makes us think ſome of the Kings Counſell at Law are gotten into the Houſe of Commons, and underhand for conſcience ſake, betray both us & their Maiſter; and we feare ere long, if theſe courſes hold, *Iſaac Pennington*

ton shall have a Monopoly of high-way passes at 2 *s. per Poll*, established by Ordinance for the good of the people, which he now exacts without comptroll.

We beseech you to think us not so void of reason, to be thus deluded, if Serjant *Wilde*, or the more learned Mr *Glyn* wouch it for Law, we shall no more beleeve it upon their words, then we did his Countrey-man Iudge *Iones*, in his opinion of Ship-mony: And never pretend to us that in cases of necessity you may doe what you list, when you pretend Liberty to declare a necessity when you please; That were to make us in farre worse condition then the Ship-money businesse, we shall find too many in both Houses full of necessities: And therefore we beseech you to consider seriously, into what desperate exigencies we are driven, and if we find not speedy relief, we must take up some of your own principles for prosecuting our Resolutions in defending our selves, in cases of urgent and unavoidable necessity: Nay, and it is high time to doe it presently, if you have sent for an Army of *Scots*, (as we heare you have) to make us a Conquered People.

We should weary out a patient Reader, to tell all our distresses, and how the businesse of *Ireland* hath been carried, and trenched too much upon the honour of those Houses which we shall study to preserve: We forbeare therefore further enumeration in our civill calamities, as unpleasing to our thoughts; and in a word or two tell you, how it hath fared with us in our Religion and Church-Government. God be blessed our Papists and Iesuits pull in their heads, and good care is taken for keeping them under, but we wish it might be done according to the Laws (which are strict enough, if well executed) and not by plundering and torturing; for if the Law be not the Rule, we, as well as they shall come under the slavery of Arbitrary Government. And to speak truth, Preaching is much advanced, but what we get one way, we lose twice as much another: for one Papist before, two seditious Sectaries and Schismatiques now; we would not be mistaken in our expression by [*Sectaries*] and [*Schismatiques*] we mean not religious and godly men or women, who make conscience of sanctifying the Sabboth, frequenting Gods Ordinances of praying and preaching, observing Family-duties, of praying and instructing their Families in the principles of Religion, abstaining from all sinne themselves to their power, and for conscience sake friendly and charitably reproving others that doe offend, and in short make conscience of every sinne, as it is an offence against God; No, God forbid we should

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labour such a thought in us, we hold out such, and pray God encrease the number; and whether they be nick-named *Puritans*, or loose *Protestats*, or any other new names of scorn, it matters not, we are contented to share with them in their disdain; I take part with those pious and learned men, *Usher*, *Morton*, *Brownerigge*, *Westfield*, though Bishops; *Holdsworth*, *Shute*, and others though in Prison, or suspected for men popishly affected, or Neutralists: But we intend such as pretend to purity without honesty, that inveigh against swearing, and practise lying, cozening, and deceiving; that cannot endure Episcopall Government, or our Book of Common-prayer, though farre better then any they can frame themselves; That would have no Government in the Church, but all to be independent; That preach, practise, and maintain Sedition, rising in Arms against the King, Gods annointed, yea, deposing and killing Kings, (that are not such as they would have them;) That take more offence at a harmlesse Ceremony, then at the loose incontinency: These are those that we inveigh against, that are come like the plague of flies, lice, and caterpillers amongst us, and are countenanced by no mean ones in both Houses, that stick not to affirme, we have had no Reformation in *England* hitherto, and so make our Religion (in which we resolve to live and die) either nothing, or heretically, and by their impudence, cunning hypocrisie, and seeming holinesse (depress with deserved poverty) and hoping to catch good fish in troubled waters, disquiet our Church, and raise and foment discord in the State, and yet are suffered to passe unpunished: Nay, the Laws against them in vilifying and disgracing our Church-Liturgy totally suspended. It may peradventure not be believed that such a thing should be, but beleeve us, a new Ordinance will do strange things in Church and Common-wealth. Nay, we expect ere long to be told, that an Order of the House of Commons will be an Ordinance too, at least bind us by, or as a Law; for it hath been put in practice already to stay proceedings in Courts of Iustice, and free a Felon out of Prison without triall: and least you think we coyn untruths (as fast as some others) you shall find by their Iournall, where they stayed all men from proceeding against Sir *Tho. Dawes*, & discharged one committed by the Ld Chief Iustice *Brampston* to Newgate for Felony, in stealing the Countesse of *Rivers* goods. And we cannot forget the Order under the *Test* of M. *Pym*, two years since, for taking the Railes from the Communion-Table, when the House of Commons it seemes had delegated their power to him (as they have done since to a close Committee of safety, a course unheard

unheard of in former times, and not more absurd then illegall and unjustifiable.) But we are told we shall have a Synod called, and a Bill passed for it, and all things shall be setled in the Church; God grant we may live to see it, for we must tell you, that we heard the House of Parliament intend to choose the Men for the Synod, (which is as advice as new as the Ordinance,) & that the greater number of them are those who oppose Episcopacy, & our Book of Common prayer; which if true, we must let you know, we hold them not fit men for such a businesse and they may spare their pains till we would have Religion, & Church-Government unsetled, which hath been their work hitherto; and we must in Justice require a Synod, such as was known to former ages; & that we may not blush to own when occasion requires. This certainly should have bin the first work, we pray it may be well setled at last. But we fear in stead of Reformatiō we shall have some idle head or other will be framing an Answer in writing to our Cōplaints, which we must tell you will give us no satisfaction; Or we shall have a new Declaration, or Remonstrance, stuft with an old story of too often-repeated miscarriages, (for when any your Ordinances that invade our Rights are to be put upon us, we never misse some such thing to accompany them, and gull us) we must tell you, It is no ease to us to be told in fine words, We shall be disabused; we desire you will begin seriously to Act, and leave writing, for we find upon all your writings, you have still gone by the worst, which makes us believe you have not the better cause, but truth is against you, having the advantage of so many able men to pen, and an inclination on your part to conceive the best of what you set forth, and prejudicacy to what is written in opposition. We therefore humbly and heartily desire both Houses to declare themselves for the maintaining the Book of Common-prayer established by Law; submitting the correcting, qualifying, or altering such things, & indifferent Ceremonies, as to a Synod lawfully called shall be thought fit, & may justly give offence to weak consciences, that Lawes may be made and executed against all Schismatiques, Heretiques, and Separatists, and these already made, executed against Papists. That Armies may be disbanded, peace established: The Scots (if sent for) discharged; and our King denied nothing that is his by the known Law of the Land, but restored to all, and be such a glorious Prince as you promised him. That the new Law by Ordinance, *i. e.* by order of either or both Houses may be abolished and damned, as was that of Ship-money, and let us heare no more of a Legislative power, but where King, Lords, and Commons concur (for we will

no more submit to it then to a new Law by Proclamation,) and we require that we may be suffered to enjoy our Lives, Liberties, and Property, according to our Petition of Rights and known Laws, and suffered to try our Rights without Parliament Injunctions. That these things may be done suddenly, and this Parliament dissolved, that so we may have liberty to proceed at Law against the severall Members of both Houses, who make use of their Priviledge, to hinder the proceedings of Iustice, and owe us many thousand pounds, and that wee may have some fruit of the Trieniall Bill. If these things may not be obtained unlesse without breach of Priviledge, we may have the names of the first Projectors of these new Ordinances, and such as labour to uphold them, We must let you know, our Resolution is to reassume the power we put into you (for we told you before, we must work upon your own principles) for you having mainly broken the trust we reposed in you, in subverting all our Laws, (which you should have preserved) we may take back what we gave you, (and we are certain, your elections are more conditionall upon that point then our Kings Crown, which comes by inheritance and succession.) And we are sure, we have as wise, religious, and honest men left behind, as we sent to the Parliament. And in case of urgent necessity (which is our case directly) our Laws being overturned, our estates and liberty lost, our Wives and Children threatned to be turned out of doores, and banisht, and our Religion endangered, we may defend our selves by Arms, and make use of what is next, and we have a president shown by your selves for the manner of that defence. And shall not be ashamed or afraid to adventure our estates and lives for defence of our known Laws, and true Protestant Religion, and not dye slaves more to the name of a Parliament, then to any Tyrant.

We have published this before we could understand the Resolution of other Counties, the times requiring it, and could not expect their Answer. If they approve it, and joyne in it, we desire them to declare so much publiquely, and to doe as we intend to doe, namely, totally oppose all new Ordinances, & maintain our Rights by our old and known Laws, assisting each other with Life and Fortune in this our Resolution, for Gods glory, our Countries good, and our own Freedom.

FINIS.